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From:RandallDavis<DAVIS%MIT-OZ@MIT-MC.ARPA>

Subject: dendral performance

To: buchanan@SUMEX-AIM.ARPA

Cc: lederberg@SUMEX-AIM.ARPA, davis%MIT-OZ@MIT-MC.ARPA

Bruce/Josh:

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I'm on a panel at IJCAI that has (among others) Stuart Dreyfus. He and Hubert have taken out against expert systems this time and made some of the usual unreasonable claims. I need a few facts to shoot them down. In one remarkable passage, they cite Duda's expert systems article which says roughly "dendral performs better than an expert chemist in some areas" and then go on to say, "well that's no big deal, an expert chemist isn't going to be an expert mass spectrum reader because most chemists don't read mass specs". I suspect they are simply being mind-bogglingly literal minded here and want to catch them at it.

So: is it in fact true that there are specific areas in which dendral is as good as the expert mass spectrum interpreter? If so, can you cite specific categories of molecules or organism families?

R Davis